



Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs
Meeting of the TFM 10-Member group and IATT in preparation of the Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs 2019

Bangkok, Thailand, 27th February – 1st March 2019

Concept Note

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Summary

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) are organising a three-day Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in preparation for the 4th STI Forum in 2019. The meeting will be attended by 30 to 40 science and technology experts from academia, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, governments, and the UN system. The meeting will focus on STI for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16, which will be under review in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2019. As in previous years, other meeting themes will include the role of traditional knowledge, potential impacts of emerging technologies, barriers for scaling-up solutions, and ways to ensure that STI benefits all, leaving no one behind. Most importantly, the meeting will also identify key lessons-learned from the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) since its inception in 2015, in order to inform the high-level review of SDG progress by the HLPF in the UN General Assembly in the latter half of 2019.

Context

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) to support the achievement of the SDGs. The TFM comprises an annual, collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum), an online platform, and the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (IATT) together with a Group of 10 High-Level Representatives from Civil Society, the Private Sector and the Scientific Community (10-Member Group).

The IATT is tasked to prepare the sessions of the STI Forum in collaboration with the “10-Member Group” appointed by the Secretary-General. The IATT is also tasked to support the development and operationalization of the Online Platform. At present, UN DESA and UNCTAD serve as the co-conveners of the IATT and provide logistical support for the organization of the STI Forum.

The 4th STI Forum will be held in May 2019. The Forum will provide inputs for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2019, which, in addition to SDG 17, will consider the following SDGs:

- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Objective

The objective of the Workshop is to prepare for the STI Forum 2019 by mobilizing stakeholders from Asia and beyond to share insights on science, technology and innovation for SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16, including specific solutions and achievements, state of the art expertise on specific issues and practice areas, emerging issues, critical knowledge and innovation gaps, as well as their views on how to better mobilize science, and technology communities to address these gaps. The meeting will also take stock of progress in the development of the TFM online platform. Most importantly, the meeting will identify key lessons-learned from the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) since its inception in 2015, in order to inform the high-level review of SDG progress by the HLPF in the UN General Assembly in the latter half of 2019.

Structure

The Workshop will be organized around the theme of the STI Forum 2019: *"STI for ensuring inclusiveness and equality, with a special focus on SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16"*. In addition and as recommended by previous sessions of the STI Forum, the following cross-cutting issues will also be discussed: indigenous knowledge; emerging technology clusters and the impacts of rapid technology change; STI roadmaps for the SDGs; TFM online platform; and lessons-learned in support of the overall TFM review at the General Assembly session of the HLPF in 2019. Following a formal opening, the remainder of the meeting will be held in a highly informal and interactive roundtable style, moderated by members of IATT and 10-Member group.

Expected outcome

The expected outcome of the Workshop will comprise a Meeting report with:

- (a) Organizational recommendations for the STI Forum 2019, including:
 - a. Suggestions on how to structure and organize the sessions;
 - b. Partners, stakeholders and communities to be mobilised for the STI Forum 2019;
 - c. Partners' specific commitments and voluntary contributions;
 - d. Collation of findings from inter-sessional activities by partners leading up to the STI Forum 2019.
- (b) Substantive recommendations for the STI Forum 2019, including:
 - a. Feedback on draft background documents for each of the sessions of the STI Forum 2019;
 - b. Status of knowledge (gaps, challenges) on STI contributions to the achievement of SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16;
 - c. Suggestions for potential concrete outcomes of the Forum 2019;
- (c) Inputs to an informal IATT paper on lessons-learned from the start-up phase of the TFM since 2015 and potential ways forward.

Participation

It is envisaged that 40 to 50 participants, including around 30 international participants, will attend the workshop. The meeting will be attended by the TFM's 10 Member Group, as well as selected experts and representatives of governments and major stakeholders of the TFM process, as well as interested Members of the UN Inter-Agency Tasks Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT).

Date and venue

The meeting will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27 February to 1 March 2019. The venue will be ESCAP headquarters on Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Dusit, Bangkok.